

ASSESSOR'S REPORT JANUARY 2013

Judy Mathiau

NEW AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY

We signed an agreement with the *Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry* for the collection of 2013 Orthoimagery. The Maine Library of Geographic Information serves as the State's coordinating body for mapping data and has implemented a 5 year program to acquire new aerial photography for the State.

This is very exciting, as it will provide a new and accurate aerial image of Winslow. The agreement states that the company (contracted by the State) will do the fly over in the spring before leaves, and the images should be delivered to us by the fall. These images will be imported into our existing mapping system as a valuable layer of data. Final cost to the Town is \$5,632. If not for this agreement and the cooperation of the State, this cost could have been more than \$10,000.

The resolution of these photos will have a horizontal accuracy of ± 2 feet! This project works in conjunction with my plan to review the town's real estate inventory. I will be able to check each parcel for buildings, topography and visible boundary markers.

HYDRO DAM SALE

Brookfield Renewable Energy Partners, owner of the Hydro Kennebec Dam, has reached an agreement to purchase the Merimil Dam from NextEra Energy. Brookfield currently owns several dams in Maine and will acquire several more through this purchase.

The Merimil Dam is located largely in Waterville however, we do share a percentage of the valuation for property tax purposes. The sale is not final as of yet, but this upcoming transaction has been enough to spike a conversation with our consultant, Bill van Tuinen, who recently appraised the larger Hydro Kennebec dam for us.

I have been meeting and conversing with Bill to discuss the ramifications of such a sale. It has been amazing to learn more about the federal regulations, the mechanisms of the wholesale power market and the impact of a an upriver storage facility on its downriver hydroelectric dams, to say the least!

NEW LEGISLATIVE SESSION

There are several bills before the legislature this session in regards to property tax. This is not unusual but it is disconcerting. Exemption of family burial plots, replacing the current homestead exemption with an exemption only eligible to those 65 or older, increasing the personal property tax relief to businesses. Many of these bills are not accepted because the cost to the State would be too great.